

COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

SHUTTING THE GALLERY.—This is what I long ago suspected would be reported to ; and, when on the second day of the Session, MR. YORKE complained of the evil effects of the Speeches, made in the House of Commons ; of the sanction which they gave to persons out of doors to spread about sentiments, calculated “*to make us hate one another* ;” when I heard this, I was pretty sure, that the *last* remedy, or the *last but one*, was about to be tried, in order to prevent us “from spreading about sentiments, calculated to make us hate one another.”—The motive for this measure is so clear ; it is so evident to every man of common discernment : it so plainly speaks for itself, and is so universally understood, that I shall not waste one moment in remarking upon the measure itself. That measure has done more than the publishing of a years’ debates. It is a trumpet-tongued fact ; and it has already done its business. Only let us remember, who it was that brought forward the measure. Let us keep him in mind.—But, a debate, which has risen out of this measure, is well worthy of our attention. I mean, the debate of the 6th instant, upon MR. SHERIDAN’s motion for a Committee to consider of the Standing Order for excluding Strangers, in which debate MR. WINDHAM took a conspicuous part, and upon which part, so taken by him, it shall be my business to comment at full, after I have inserted what has been published as his Speech upon that occasion, and have given some account of what appears to have been said by others. — MR. SHERIDAN acknowledged, that the right of any member to move for the exclusion of strangers was recognized by a Standing Order, and that his motion needed no one to second it, nor need he state any reasons ; but, that, upon the bare motion of any member, at any time, the house must be cleared of strangers. He acknowledged that this was the *law* of the House ; but, he insisted, that there were many other of its laws, which had fallen into disuse ; and, he said, that what he wished

for was, not a rescinding of the Order, but such an alteration of it as would prevent any member from clearing the gallery at his will and pleasure ; that he wished the matter to be subservient to reason, and not left to wild caprice, or, which was worse, to make the liberty of publishing speeches subservient to partiality, and, in fact, making it a sure means of deluding the public.— In answer to this speech of Mr. Sheridan came that of Mr. Windham, and, as I mean, that he shall, in this instance, at any rate, have no reason to complain of a want of *full justice*, I shall give his words, just as I find them published in the news-papers, not looking upon myself as answerable for their correctness. I find a publication of a thing, called a speech, under his name, and upon that publication I shall freely comment.—“Mr. Windham said, he supposed it might create some surprise that he should, on the present occasion, speak and vote against the motion brought forward by his hon. friend. This was, however, one of those accidental matters in which he had always differed in opinion with his hon. friend. His hon. friend had said, he thought it a matter of importance ; he for his own part confessed he did not think it was. This would frequently be the case. The importance of the war had not weighed sufficiently with his hon. friend to bring him to the House in the various questions concerning it, though this Standing Order had produced that effect. His hon. friend had always been an advocate for the Liberty of the Press. He (Mr. Windham) was the same ; but on other grounds, and what had been said by his hon. friend on the present question, seemed to him to be rather the matter of a threat than an argument. To allude to the enforcement of all other Standing Orders was a threat, and not an argument. This Standing Order had obtained and been submitted to for a century, and no inconvenience had been found in it till within the last 30 years. His hon. friend seemed to consider the right of admission of strangers into the gallery as a part of the consti-

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"tution; whereas, on the contrary, it had "been granted as a mere matter of favour. "He would first ask, how much the coun- "try had gained in its affairs since that "practice had obtained? He could not "say in what respect the country had "gained any thing; past times might be "contrasted with the present: but still, "from the daily manner in which the de- "bates were published, he wanted to know "in what way he was to state the advan- "tages accruing to the country. *What* "was the value to their constituents of know- "ing what was passing in that House? Sup- "posing they should never know, it was only "the difference between a Representative "government and a democracy. Till "within the last twenty or thirty years, it "not only was not practised as now, but "it was not even permitted to publish the "debates of that house. So lately as the "time of Dr. Johnson, the debates were "never published but under fictitious "names. He was one of those who liked "the constitution as it was, he did not "like it as it is. If this had been tolerated, "winked at, and suffered, it was no reason "that it should on all occasions be conti- "nued, and that persons should make a trade "of what they obtain from the galleries, "among whom were to be found men of all "descriptions; bankrupts, lottery-office keepers, "footmen, and decayed tradesmen. He had "heard that the Proprietors of Papers had "talked of the injustice of closed doors. "This was taking up the subject as if the "admission of strangers into the Gallery "was a privilege, but it was no such thing, "and though he might perhaps think it "useful after having so long prevailed, "he did not allow it to be a privilege. "Were that the case we should come into "a state of democracy; a state like that "of Athens. He did not think accounts "in the Daily Papers were so desirable as "many others did. They had lately re- "viled Government so far as to assert, "that some of their contemporaries were "in the pay of Government. What did "this prove? not the value or actual im- "portance of Papers; but it clearly shewed "that if Government could have them in "their pay, then Papers were liable to be "let for hire; to be bought and sold; and "the press, which has been thought in "this country the palladium of its liberty, "was always to be purchased by the high- "est bidder. He did not wish to estab- "lish such a power in the press as to en- "able it to controul Parliament. *He did*

"not know any of the Conductors of the Press; "but he understood them to be a set of "men who would give into the corrupt mis- "representation of opposite sides; and he "was therefore determined not to lend his "hand to abrogate an order which was "made to correct an abuse. He now saw "that it led to consequences of a most "mischievous tendency; no less than to "change the character of a Representative "Government into that of a democracy; "and led directly to that despotism which "had so lately desolated other countries. He "did not like to part with a Standing "Order, which, though it might have run "to rest, would not in former times have "led to any mischief, and he could see no "reason why it should now be laid pro- "strate at the foot of the very worshipful, "but he would not say ancient, *Corpora- tion of London Printers*. Those gentry "had their favourites. His hon. friend "was esteemed and hailed by them as a "general patron of the London Press. He "thought the House ought to discard a "sort of disgraceful objection to its pro- "ceedings, and maintain those rules and "orders which has so long prevailed. He "would assert, that the rights of the House "were now in danger of being lost from "misuse. It was like shutting up the "gates of a park, in order to prevent a "custom to a path-way. It was like the "O. P.'s, who had set themselves up as the "people of the country, and by a system of "opposition and violence had compelled the "Proprietors of the Theatre to give them "plays at their own price. In this way "the Proprietors of Newspapers told them "that the people must have a daily pub- "lication of the proceedings of that House "at their breakfast; and, in the name of "the Public, say, we have that right, and "have friends in the House that will sup- "port us in our claim. His hon. friend "had said the character of the House was "at stake; according to which argument, "all the Houses for the last thirty years "had no character or ability at stake. "His hon. friend was now also most "anxious for the characters of Ministers; "he could not blame him for that sensibili- "ty, but he (Mr. Windham) was anxious "for the fame of this House, and could "not see why they should hesitate in sup- "porting a Standing Order, which had "the sanction of so many years in its "favour. For these reasons he should "certainly give his vote against the mo- "tion."—The motion of MR. SHERIDAN

was supported by LORD FOLKESTONE, Mr. TIERNEY, Mr. P. MOORE, Hon. Mr. LITTLETON, and SIR FRANCIS BURDETT; and was opposed by Mr. YORKE and Mr. PERCEVAL.—Mr. Sheridan replied to Mr. Windham, “He said that his hon. friend had begun his speech by criticising his (Mr. Sheridan’s) absence from the House on former occasions during the present Session. On this subject he must take leave to judge for himself when his presence in the House was necessary, and when not.—His hon. friend had arraigned him for not being present to support the charges which he stated had been proved against his Majesty’s Ministers. On the first day of the Session he had attended, and had voted for the Amendment. Since that period he had been much occupied with private business; but he had a right, when he felt that a question was agitating of infinitely greater importance than any question of a mere political nature could possibly be, to put aside his private business, and to attend for the purpose of assisting in the determination of that question. Such was the present question. On the first day of the Session he had heard one side of the House arraigning the other as utterly incapable of fulfilling the duties of office. That might or might not be true. But the other side retorted that they were at least as competent as their adversaries, and that they possessed at least an equal share of the public confidence. Now, for what he knew, the country at large, with a very civil kind of impartiality, might believe both parties—*(a laugh).* The inference which he would draw from this circumstance was, that the House should guard against adding to the unfavourable impression which such mutual accusations were calculated to produce. His hon. friend had called him ‘a counsel for the Press.’ If he was so, he was an unfeé’d one. He was proud of the appellation. But he confessed that he was a good deal surprised when his Honourable Friend put in his claim for a share of the distinction. If on that ground his honourable friend meant to hug him in a fraternal embrace, he begged leave to decline the honour *(a laugh).* “For myself,” continued Mr. S. “I have always been a friend to the Liberty of the Press. Give to Ministers a servile House of Peers:—give them a venal and a pliant House of Commons;—give them the keys of the

Treasury and the patronage of the Crown;—and then give me the Liberty of the Press;—and with this mighty engine I will destroy the edifice of corruption, and establish on its ruins the rights and privileges of the people!—His only object in the motion which he had submitted to the House was, not to prevent any individual member from clearing the Gallery, but to require that after he had done so, he should descend to give some reason for the step. The hon. Gentleman opposite said, it was his humour. That was the very thing of which he (Mr. Sheridan) complained. If, after the exclusion of strangers, the House should acquiesce in the propriety of the motives for that exclusion, the public would then be satisfied. To some of the opinions of his hon. friend, he had listened with the greatest regret, and even horror. For the first time in his life, he had almost wished that the Public had been excluded from hearing his opinions. The friendship which he had long entertained for his hon. friend, and his regard for his hon. friend’s character and honour, struggling with his own sense of public duty, had nearly induced him to regret that there was a single stranger present, to listen to or report his sentiments. His hon. friend had asserted a broad general principle, that the publication of the proceedings of Parliament was injurious to the country. He had declared, that when the doors of the Gallery of that House were closed, the country had done well. He (Mr. Sheridan) was not one of those who thought or spoke despondingly of the situation, or degradingly of the character of the country. On the contrary, he was of opinion that Great Britain stood on a proud eminence, struggling as she was, and successfully struggling as he hoped she would be, for the liberties of the world. That honourable spirit by which the people of England were animated in this great contest, he attributed to the Liberty of the Press generally, and most particularly and emphatically to the liberty of reporting and publishing the debates and proceedings in Parliament. But his hon. friend had again set up the old BUGBEAR, and had characterised this practice as mischievous, and leading to revolutionary doctrines, and to the undervaluing of the blessings of the British Constitution. The Liberty of the Press lead to revol-

"tionary doctrines! Was it the Liberty of the Press which brought on the French revolution? Was it not rather the extinguishing of every opportunity by the press of giving vent to complaint which produced that event? What had occasioned the fall of all the rotten monarchies of Europe? Was it the Liberty of the Press? No! It was the absence of that liberty. If the Liberty of the Press had existed in France, in Austria, in Prussia, in Spain, those countries would not now be enduring the oppressive domination of a Bonaparte."

—Now, I am about to offer some remarks upon this publication, called the Speech of MR. WINDHAM. I shall consider that publication as dividing itself into two parts, PUBLIC and PERSONAL. —As to the first, we will begin where Mr. Sheridan left off, namely, at this conjuring up of that old humbugging bugbear, the French Revolution, by the means of which so much mischief has been done in this country, so much oppression practised with impunity, and so much debt and misery entailed upon this credulous nation. Mr. Windham is afraid, that the securing to people admission into the gallery to take debates may lead to a repetition of all "the horrors of the French revolution." —Reader, do you know of any one thing, which men in power dislike, which they do not tell you will tend to produce the horrors of the French revolution? Not one. The cry of No-Popery was not more scandalously hypocritical than this. The howl has never changed, though the state of France, and the example of France, have totally changed. When the nefarious howl was first set up, France was in a state of anarchy; it afterwards formed a sort of democratical Government; then a species of Representative Government; and, last of all, a simple military despotism; but, through all these changes, the cry of French Revolution has been kept up by those, who have wished (and for their own good reasons) to alarm and keep in subjection the people of England, who have been persuaded, by such persons, that, let what will be imposed upon them, they must bear it all, or, that they must undergo the horrors of a French Revolution. Complain of oppressive taxes and still more oppressive tax-gatherers, the answer is, "what, then, you would have a French Revolution?" Tell the partizans of tyranny of any thing that you have to complain of, however galling, and

their answer invariably amounts to this, that you must quietly submit to it, or that you will see "all the horrors of a French Revolution". This has been a potent engine in all sorts of ways; with juries, with public bodies, with thousands and hundreds of thousands of honest individuals. It is time, however, that this scare-crow was universally despised; nor, if any one has still the confidence to make use of it, would it be amiss to enter into an examination as to what France has lost or gained, by her revolution. Of one thing, at any rate, we are certain, and that is, that we hear of no such inquiries going on in France as we have seen going on in England.—Baron Douro is, it seems, to have a pension of 2,000*l.* a year for three generations, out of our taxes. The honourable Mr. Villiers is a representative of the King in Portugal. Mr. Hunt is a member of the House of Commons, and has voted this session on the side of the minister.—Mr. Windham accused Mr. Sheridan of not attending the House upon important subjects, like that *about the conducting of the war*, to which the other replied, that he looked upon this question as being of much greater importance. To be sure; and who does not? The questions about the war are, in fact, questions about the turning out of the ministry; questions about the putting out of Lord Hawkesbury and putting Mr. Windham in his stead, and these are questions, in which no man of common sense can feel the smallest interest. Mr. Windham may be angry that the public are cold upon that point; but, I can assure him, that it is a point, upon which they are even more indifferent than upon a choice between the two kings of Spain, Joseph and Ferdinand. No; this is not what interests the people of England. They are no longer to be cajoled into the trammels of party. That is over. They feel their grievances, and, if these are to continue, they care not one straw who have the benefit of them. The set now in power endeavour to scare them, upon all occasions, with the horrors of the French Revolution, and Mr. Windham does the same. He may, therefore, be out of temper with the people for their indifference, but his anger will be of no avail. This question, brought forward by Mr. Sheridan, was a question in which the people were really interested; for, it was of importance for them to know how the members acted, during the inquiry that is going on. This they are now prevented from

knowing, in consequence of the Debate-Reporters being shut out of the gallery. Mr. Sheridan's object was to re-open that gallery; and, compared to such a question, what was all the party trumpery about the *conducting of the war?*—MR. WINDHAM asked, “what was the value to “their constituents to know what passed in “that House.” Very true: to the constituents at *St. Mawes*, or *Higham Ferrers*, or *Old Sarum*, it may be of little value; but, to the constituents of Sir Francis Burdett, for instance, it is of very great value to know what passes in that House.—He said, that the Debates were not permitted to be published till within these last thirty years, and that the state of the country had *not improved* during that time; a notorious and melancholy truth, but, then, he should have added, that he himself had been a minister during no small part of that time.—But, I find that, for want of time, I must put off till another week, any further observations upon the *public* part of this speech, and devote the little time I have left, to the *personal*, the gross personal attack, contained in this publication, called a Speech of Mr. Windham.—That gentleman is represented, in the speech above-inserted, to have said, that “the publishers of Debates, made a trade of the thing;—that, amongst these publishers there were all sorts of persons, *Bankrupts*, *Lottery-Office keepers*, *Footmen*, and *Decayed Tradesmen*; that he did not know any of them, but that he had heard, that they were a sort of men, who would give into corrupt misrepresentations of opposite sides.”—In the first place, this general, this sweeping assault, and that, too, in a place where he well knew that none of the assaulted parties could answer him without the certainty of being sent to Newgate, was any thing but manly.—In the next place, the description is not true, but as far from the truth as any thing well can be. I can, for my part, see nothing despicable in the trade of a Lottery-Office-keeper, any more than in that of a stock-broker; in both cases, there is a species of gambling, but one is just as fair as the other, and, the thing being so common, there is nothing, in either trade, to render the person who follows it an object of obloquy. But, as to the fact, it is *not true*. There is no person in London, at all connected with the taking or the publishing of Parliamentary Debates, who does, or ever has, kept a Lottery Office. So much for that part of the charge.—Then, as to Foot-

men. Upon what ground does Mr. Windham assert, that there are footmen amongst these, who are concerned in the taking and publishing of Debates? Is the taking of those debates, and the preparing of them for the press, a footman-like talent? But, the fact is *not true*; I assert the fact to be totally destitute of truth. The gentlemen, who take the debates in the gallery, are, and, indeed, they necessarily must be, possessed of great and rare talents. The education of most of them has been of the superior kind. Many of them have been at College with the members whose speeches they are employed to report; and, I am assured, that, in some instances, those in the Gallery have received prizes, and actually beaten those upon the floor. Was it, then, fair play, to describe these gentlemen as footmen; as the lowest and most contemptible of mankind; and, that, too, I repeat it, in a place, where he who was giving the description knew that the aspersed party dared not to answer him?—But, even this would not have drawn an observation from me, had not the attack been so directly levelled at one particular individual. MR. WINDHAM spoke of *Bankrupts*, as being conspicuous amongst those who are engaged in the publishing of Parliamentary Debates. He puts *Bankrupts* at the head of the degraded list.—Mr. Windham has never, upon any occasion, that I have observed; and, I appeal to the reader, whether I may not say, that he never, upon any occasion, has expressed the slightest degree of disapprobation of *any peculator*, great or small. Never; and, when the most corrupt practices have been brought forward, such as the selling and the buying of seats in the House of Commons, he has been not amongst the first, but the very first, the very foremost in the foremost rank, to apologize for, or to defend, such practices, and to attribute all complaint against them to popular clamour and seditious views. Yet, this Gentleman appears to hold a *Bankrupt* in perfect abhorrence! If there were, amongst the reporters and publishers of Debates, persons, who have been reduced to a state of *Bankruptcy*, would it follow, thence, that it was not useful and proper to publish the Debates? A man may become a bankrupt, without any blemish to his character; and, what is more, the literary and political turn of mind, which may eminently fit for the taking and the publishing of Debates, may have been the very cause of his failure in

those concerns, which demand qualities of a different description. How many good, how many excellent men, do every one of us know, who have been Bankrupts, or, at least, who, without any dishonesty, either in act or intention, have been unable to pay their debts?—Besides, if we were to allow, that to have been a bankrupt is sufficient to make a man for ever afterward an object of contempt, what Bankrupt is there, who has any thing to do with the taking or the publishing of Debates? Where will Mr. Windham find any Bankrupts amongst them? And what right could he have, unless he had named the parties, to declare in the face of the whole nation, that the persons who had to do with the Debates had bankrupts amongst them? Can he point out any one man amongst them, who is, or ever has been a bankrupt?—Yes, he *does know one*; and, the public shall now have an opportunity of judging of that *nice sense of feeling* and that *high-mindedness*, which have been thought to belong to Mr. Windham's character.—The gentleman, here alluded to, is MR. WRIGHT, who has always been the sole editor and part proprietor of my PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES, which have now, under his ability and unwearied attention, reached to 14 Volumes, the execution of which has been admired by every body who has ever seen them.—Mr. Wright, in the year 1801, failed, in the trade of bookselling, which he carried on in Piccadilly. With all the circumstances of that failure I was particularly acquainted. He was, in the first place, too young for such a business; he was a bachelor; he took more delight in reading of books than in selling of them; and, which was the chief cause of his pecuniary failure, he had the misfortune to be bookseller to Messrs. Canning, Frere, Ellis, and the other Anti-Jacobins, by whose works, though such a puffing was made about them, he, to my certain knowledge, lost many hundreds of pounds. His *Bankruptcy*, however, was, at last, to be attributed to *a want of collecting his debts*: and, if all had been managed, as in such cases things never are, he would have had more than sufficient to pay every farthing that he owed. I, who was one of his creditors, was so well convinced of his honourable conduct, that, finding him sued by one person, who had not come into the list, I assisted him through that difficulty; and, seeing him once more ready to begin the world afresh, I proposed to him the editing

of the PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES, of which we have now continued the publication since the year 1803. Since that, as the public well know, the PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY and the STATE TRIALS have been undertaken by me, towards the compiling of the former of which, in particular, Mr. Wright greatly contributes.—Was it, then, at this distance of time, right to revive the recollection of this gentleman's pecuniary embarrassments, not only with which, but with the whole history and detail of which Mr. Windham was perfectly acquainted? It could not be *a slip of the tongue*; for, we have *bankrupt* at the head of the list, and *decayed tradesman* at the end of it. Was this attack, then, manly? Was it liberal? Does the reader discover in it any of that tenderness and delicacy, which Mr. Windham observes towards *affledged* corruptors and peculators?—MR. WRIGHT is, too, a person so well-known, so famed, if I may use the word, for the mildness of his manners, for his inoffensive and obliging disposition. Scores, and, I believe, I may say hundreds, of the members of the two Houses, have had experience of this disposition; and, I am not afraid to appeal to any one of them, of *any party*, whether he has not always found Mr. Wright ready to correct any error, and, in short, ready to do every thing, which appeared necessary to the making of the Debates as nearly as possible a record of what actually took place in the House. Through the whole of the 14 volumes, there is not a single instance of partiality; and, though Mr. Windham was pleased to say, that he "*understood*" the publishers of debates to be "*a sort of men, who would give into corrupt misrepresentations of opposite sides*," Mr. Wright, though he has frequently been offered money for the inserting of particular speeches, has never taken a farthing in his life, and I hereby defy any one to say, that he ever did, or that a farthing was ever taken by any one, who has had any thing to do with the work.—Is the public to be reminded, then, with respect to such a man, that he was once a Bankrupt? Nay, is he still to be called a Bankrupt? Is a person, who once fails in trade, no matter from what cause, to be trodden down for ever? Is he, if he happens, as is the case with Mr. Wright, to recover, by his talents and industry, what he has before lost, and to be in a fair way of passing the rest of his life in ease and respectability; is he, in such a case, to be twitted with his former

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failure; and is the public eye, ever-and-anon, to be drawn back to the date of his pecuniary distresses?—Still, however, in any other member of parliament; nay, in almost any other man in the whole world, Mr. Wright might have forgiven this attack; but, in Mr. Windham, it is not to be forgiven.—What I am now going to state is not at all necessary to the vindication of the character of Mr. Wright, whose character is known to so large a portion of the public; but, I shall state it, in order to enable that public to form its judgment upon the attack on that character.—Be it known to the public, then, that, of all the Noblemen and Gentlemen, for whom Mr. Wright has corrected or inserted Debates; of all the persons, whom he has ever obliged in this way, he never obliged any one so much as Mr. Windham; nay, I am of opinion, that he has done more to oblige Mr. Windham in this way, than he has ever done to oblige all the other members put together. This seems hardly credible; but, it is the fact. This gentleman, who carries his contempt of the “*traders*” in debates to such a height; who, to hear him, one would think, would disdain to speak to them, much less to have recourse to their assistance; this high-minded gentleman, this Mr. Windham, *who does not care whether his constituents know what is passing or not*; this same gentleman has given Mr. Wright more trouble about his speeches than, if it had been duly paid for, would have cost, according to the worth of Mr. Wright’s time, five hundred pounds. Innumerable are the times that he has sent for this “*bankrupt*” to his house to consult him about the correcting and publishing of his speeches; Mr. Wright has received, he supposes, two hundred notes and letters from him upon the subject of his speeches, made at different times; and, as to “giving ‘into corrupt misrepresentations,’ so far from his ever having witnessed any disposition of that sort in Mr. Wright, we have, both of us, though his speeches gave very great trouble and put us to considerable expence, took pleasure in having them upon record as full as possible. In the Printer (Mr. Hansard’s) bill for the Debates of the very last Session, there is the following charge against us:

“Corrections, Revises, Slips, &c.

“ &c. of Mr. Windham’s

“ Speeches (various) . . £.9 11 6”

Now, observe, reader, not the printing of his Speeches, after he had altered them

from the news-papers, or written them out a-new; not, the *printing*, but the *alterations* made by Mr. Windham himself, *after* the speeches had been printed off upon slips of paper. Mean wretches, as he chooses to represent us, all in a lump; and “*bankrupt*” as Mr. Wright was to be still called, Mr. Windham never heard of this charge before; no, nor of any other such charge, though we are both of opinion, and I state it as a truth, of which we are convinced, that, during the 14 Volumes of Debates, *alterations*, of the sort above-described, made with Mr. Windham’s own hand, upon slips sent to him at his request, and without any possible view of gain on our part, have cost us upwards of *seventy pounds*.—Mr. Wright has sent him *proofs*, and even *revises* (that is to say, second proofs) down into Norfolk; and, what I suspected, but did not know, till I came to town, the publication of the last Volume of Debates was *delayed* for weeks, in order solely to oblige him.—These facts, while they enable the public to judge of Mr. Windham’s conduct towards Mr. Wright, will also enable them to form a pretty correct estimate of the sincerity of that *carelessness*, which he professed to feel as to what became of his speeches after they were uttered. But, there is still a fact to be related, which will place this sincerity in a very nice point of view; and that is the fact, that Mr. Windham, who has such a contempt for the Reporters and the Gallery, has, not once or twice, but many times, asked this “*bankrupt*,” whether he was *well heard in the gallery*; what *impression his speech produced*; and consulted with him how he should *modulate his voice*, *how and where he should stand*, so as to be *best heard in the gallery*; *aye*, in the gallery, by those “*bankrupts*, lottery-office-keepers, footmen, and decayed tradesmen!”—Such are the facts.—And “he did not know any of the conductors of the press, but he had heard about them!”—The comment I leave to the public; but, I cannot help adding, that I regard this attack upon the characters, in a lump, of the persons connected with the press, as of a piece with all those numerous means, which since about a year ago, have been put in motion for the purpose of *stifling the press*, towards which end nothing would be more likely to contribute, than the creating of a general belief, that we, who are the conductors of the press, are, without discrimination, a set of worthless wretches.

Upon public ground, therefore, as well as in justice to MR. WRIGHT (the attack upon whom was too palpable not to be perceived by every one), I have stated the above facts; and, upon public ground I insert the letter, which will immediately follow this article, and which will be found well worthy of the reader's attention. I am told, that the author of it is a young gentleman of very amiable character, a good scholar, and an excellent artist into the bargain. And, does Mr. Windham suppose, that such men, because they have not privilege of parliament, have no feelings? Some persons may say: "it is *impossible*, that he *should mean* to allude to Mr. Wright." One would hope so, if one could; but, when we, in looking round, can find no other person, at all connected with debate-publishing, who has ever had the misfortune to be a Bankrupt, we must conclude, either that he meant to point at Mr. Wright, or, which does not much mend the case, that the charge was made without the least consideration as to any fact in support of it.

W^M. COBBETT.

London, 9th Feb. 1810.

MR. WINDHAM'S ATTACK UPON THE PRESS.

(From the *Morning Post* of Feb. 8, 1810.)

SIR—A proper jealousy of character, and a due estimation of public opinion, have ever been considered by wise and virtuous men as among the surest indications of the presence of wisdom and virtue. The laudable sensibility which you have shewn to the aspersions of Mr. WINDHAM on the Editors of the London Newspapers, and my long experience of the liberality of your mind, justify me in the conviction that you will allow to an individual of another class, which has incurred the unmerited censure of that Gentleman, the privilege of entering his protest against the justice of that censure, and against the accuracy of the statements upon which it was supported.—Mr. WINDHAM has thought fit publicly to characterise the Reporters of Parliamentary Debates in terms of general and unqualified reprobation, too gross to be repeated, and as unfounded in truth as they were coarse and illiberal in expression. I will venture to assert, without fear of contradiction by any one who knows those gentlemen, that there are among them men of as respectable birth, of as liberal education, of as honourable principles, and of as fair

fame, in the comparatively limited circle in which they move, as their accuser himself, with all those adventitious advantages which the possession of wealth may have afforded him. It is rather too much when an individual such as I have described, preferring honourable and vigorous exertion to ignoble idleness, has been daily and nightly toiling in the execution of a task of the highest interest to the public; and who in the faithful execution of that painful task (equally harrassing to the mind and to the body) enjoys, as the sole satisfaction for a shattered constitution, the consciousness of deserving well of his country—it is rather too much for such an individual, so circumstanced, to hear a member of that house of parliament, whose proceedings it has been his anxious wish and endeavour accurately to convey to their constituents, speak of him in language, the bare recollection of which raises in my cheek the blush of shame and indignation. I appeal to my countrymen whether it is consonant to the generosity and courage of Englishmen to attack any man under circumstances in which the assailant is assured of impunity? Protected by the privileges of the House of Commons—privileges which no one respects more than myself—Mr. Windham has ventured to describe us as a worthless and a venal set of men. Sir, I call upon him to prove his assertion. I call upon him to adduce an instance of that venality. Let us have facts, not inuendoes. I will set the honourable gentleman an example. I will state a transaction which occurred at no very distant period; and the truth of my statement I am prepared to establish in any way that may be demanded of me. A member of the present house of commons (a gentleman of whom I am sure I am not disposed to say any thing at all disrespectful) sent me a note, during an important debate, intimating that he was about to address the house, and requesting that I would pay particular attention to his speech; adding that he would make me a handsome pecuniary acknowledgment for my trouble. It was not difficult for an honest man to decide how to act on such an occasion. To the note I gave no answer; and to the honourable gentleman's speech I paid precisely that attention to which, in the exercise of my judgment, and in the discharge of my duty to you, Sir, and to the public, it appeared to me to be entitled.—The next day the honourable member inclosed to me a check upon his

banker. This I instantly returned, accompanied by a few lines, in which I observed that he had entirely mistaken my character, and I firmly believed the character of all my coadjutors, if he imagined that we were to be influenced in the performance of that which we conceived to be a public duty by any private consideration. My correspondent then came up to the gallery, and we had a short conversation, in which I frankly expressed my sentiments on the subject, and which terminated by a polite acknowledgment on his part of my disinterestedness. To a gentleman, the Reporter of another Paper, this hon. member made a similar application, and from him he experienced a similar line of conduct. Now, Sir, to the general charge of venality, here are in reply two particular proofs of the contrary. Let Mr. Windham bring a fact in answer to them; and I assure him that I will be as ready as himself to attach to the person on whom he can fasten it the odium which he deserves. But, even in that case, a case the existence of which I at present totally disbelieve, Mr. Windham, in the opinion of every rational and generous man, will remain unjustified for having visited the sins of an individual upon a whole profession; and for having given to many a manly and independent mind the pain which those who are desirous of preserving the good opinion of their fellow-citizens, must feel at an attack so virulent and unprovoked.—As to the manner in which the task assigned to Parliamentary Reporters is executed, you will, perhaps, Sir, permit me to say, that when the peculiar inconveniences to which those gentlemen are subject are considered, deprived as they are of those facilities which could so easily be afforded them, and even compelled to struggle for their situations in the gallery of the house of commons with the herd of common and comparatively uninterested strangers who frequent it, the accuracy of their Reports is a matter of surprise, and, I will be bold to add, ought to be one of general gratitude. That these Reports are free from error, nobody will assert; but that they are much more correct than under the disadvantageous circumstances of every description in which they are composed could possibly be expected, every candid man must willingly allow.—I am, Sir, your obedient humble servant,

A REPROTER OF PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES FOR THE
MORNING POST.

COBBETT'S Parliamentary Debates:

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LORD GAMBIER.

*Lord Cochrane's Reply.—(Continued
from p. 192.)*

2. Did you know previous to the 12th of April, of any anchorage above the Boyart-shoal and near the Palles shoal, for line of battle ships out of range of the enemy's shells?—A. I knew of no anchorage.—2. Have you acquired a knowledge of any such since?—A. I have not.—2. Were you in the road of Aix, after the British ships were placed for the purpose of attacking the enemy?—A. No. So much for this gentleman's knowledge of that to which he positively swears.—Now, Sir; let us see Mr. Stokes's evidence on this head. “He does not know the distance between the sands from his own soundings,” yet he positively swears that “the space for anchorage is much confined, and the water round it shoal, that it is difficult for large ships, and that the Channel is very narrow.”—Why, Sir, even by his fabricated chart, which he says he copied from the Neptune François, the channel is a mile wide, and neither bank or shoal between where our fleet lay and the Cassard and Foudroyant, which he has very injuriously contrived to put in a corner, a mile distant from Aix, though in his evidence he swears they were only one third of the distance, and here is his deposition.—“The Cassard and Foudroyant both lay afloat, the Cassard one third of a mile from Aix, the Foudroyant three cables length astern of her.”—The reason, Sir, for making a corner between two shoals, and putting them in it, was to prevent the possibility of getting under their sterns and between them and the ships on shore, which, Mr.

Stokes has sworn, "lay on the Western part of the Palles shoal, the three decker on the North West edge of the Palles shoal, with her broad side flanking the passage, the N. W. part nearest to the deep water," although in his fabricated chart he has transported them from the N. W. part nearest to the deep water, to the S. E. side farthest from the deep water beyond the Tonnere, where he says they "never could have been got at for the shot to reach." This chart, it is affirmed by Mr. Stokes, is taken from the Neptune, but the space is contracted to about one third of its size. For what reason, Sir, could this be done, but to induce a belief of the "unwarrantable peril," to which his Majesty's ships would have been exposed. Mr. Stokes confessed on his examination his ignorance of the distance between the sounds, and yet presumed to deliver to the Court a chart, not, of the scale of the Neptune François, of which, it professed to be a copy. And to crown all, Sir, after having sworn that it was a chart, of the position of the enemy's ships, on, and previous to the 12th April, he, on a subsequent day, when asked by the President, who observed that "the Ocean was not marked on the 12th, she was unmarked on the 13th," afterwards positively swears that the only ships marked on this foul fabrication, "are the ships that were destroyed." Yet inadvertently several officers have spoken to this chart as correct, and some have even deposed, that it was impossible to pass under the stern of the Foudroyant, between her and the bank, although, she was seven miles from them, and the bank, from nine, to thirteen feet, under water. I trust, Sir, this is sufficient, all this I can prove to the world by the testimony given by the witnesses themselves. Another naval member opposite has offered to prove a fact which, he must do me the justice to own, is not within his own knowledge—That I was to blame for the failure of the fire ships; and he states, first, that the explosion vessel was a signal to the fire ships, and next, that she was improperly exploded. Now, Sir, this gives me an opportunity to remark again on the conduct of the Court. How rigorous, as to the law on one side, and how lax on the other. Lord Gambier, too, has asserted that, which the honourable gentleman has undertaken to prove, but his Lordship did not prove it, and I will tell the House why he did not prove it, because the explosion vessel was no signal to the fire ships. Orders

written out by me, were delivered by Lord Gambier in the cabin of the Caledonia, directing quite the contrary—Ordering them to use their discretion as to the time when they were to be kindled, and had the state of the weather rendered it practicable to couple them together, the senior officer of each division of four, was to shew a lanthorn, or a false fire, to direct, whether, the long, or short fuses were to be kindled.—And an acknowledgment of the delivery of these Orders will be found in Lord Gambier's Official Letter, I think of the 10th of May. The Court, however, refused to receive this document which I offered to them, because, they said it was not relevant to the charge, although the Court, had not only suffered Lord Gambier to make the assertion, but had themselves examined several witnesses to the point. So far, Sir, from the explosion having been a signal for the fire ships to kindle, the fire ships were, by their written orders, to go in, in three divisions, each half a mile apart, and the explosion vessels half a mile a head of them. Thus much for the signal, and for the impartiality of the Court. Now, Sir, as to the place in which the vessel exploded; and Mr. Fairfax, one of the fabricators of the chart, is the only person examined to this point; he, Sir, notwithstanding that he has sworn that she blew up within two cables length of the Lyra, has a remark a little unfortunate, on a chart or in a letter, I do not remember which, in the Naval Chronicle (I think of July): "the French frigate (*F.*) cut or slipped before the fire ships got to where they were set fire to;" the fact is, Sir, the explosion vessel blew up close to her.—I submit to this house—many of the members are military men, and all are capable to judge of the fact, whether one hundred barrels of powder, covered with shells, and at least a thousand grenades, would not have destroyed the Lyra, if exploded, within two cables length. The Court, indeed, asked Mr. Fairfax "where he was when she blew up," and he answered, "In the Lyra."—In the Lyra, Sir, was his answer; the Court did not put a question on the minutes, Was you on deck in the Lyra? If I could make use of notes which I had taken, I might submit also to this House, whether, a man who was below, at the explosion of the first part of 100 barrels of powder, could get on deck to see the second part exploded. Lord Gambier's defence was full of accusations against me. Evidences were examined to

prove these, though they did not relate in any way to the charge, and I was not suffered to ask one single question to refute them, or to be present when the defence was read. Sir, I was even sent out of Court, and denied the privilege of hearing it, although, when an evidence on the late trial of a member of this House, I was sent for.—If, Sir, there were no other reasons for the production of the Minutes which I have called for, but that I am now put upon my defence: that accusations are made, which, in justice to my feelings, and my character, I must refute, I humbly submit to this House, that in justice to me they ought now to be produced, and I trust, Sir, that for reasons more important to the country they will not be refused; that this House will not shut their eyes and go blindfold to the vote. If so, the country must—will not follow their example. Sir, I shall not detain the House longer than to re-assert all that I have pledged myself to prove, and sake every thing that is valuable to man on the issue. If the Minutes are granted, I shall expose such a scene, as will, perhaps, make my country tremble for its safety. I intreat the House well to consider, that there is a tribunal to which it is answerable, that of posterity, which will try all our actions, and judge impartially.

EAST INDIA COMPANY.

Sir;—The measures, which are said to be in agitation between Government and the Company, make it absolutely necessary that the Public should be reminded of the state of the transactions betwixt those parties for some years past.

SERIES OF FACTS.

1. The mode established and pursued by Lord Melville, Lord Castlereagh, and Lord Morpeth, for bringing before the House of Commons a regular State of the Company's Affairs, was by the production of an annual Budget, with all the accounts that belonged to it, both at home and abroad, on the professed principle and for the declared purpose of the greatest possible publicity.

2. This form of proceeding was abandoned by Mr. Robert Dundas, in the year 1807, because the then actual state of the Company's affairs required another mode of investigation.

3. As the Company's distresses, how-

ever, were very pressing, an Act of Parliament was past, to enable them to borrow two millions on their Bonds, without any previous examination of their accounts, but with the strongest declarations on the part of his Majesty's Ministers that the Public was not bound or pledged, in any sense or shape, to answer for this Loan.

4. On the 7th of August 1807, the House of Commons resolved, "That this House will take into consideration, early in the next session of Parliament, the accounts presented to this House on the 10th and 18th days of July last, respecting the Revenues and Charges, and the Commercial concerns of the East India Company."

5. The earliest day, that could be found for this promised investigation, was the 11th of March, 1808, when a select Committee was appointed "to inquire into the present state of the affairs of the East India Company, and to report the same, as it shall appear to them, to the House, with their observations thereupon."

6. The first document laid before the Committee, dated 1 April, 1808, and which is not yet made public, was an Exposition of the whole State of the Company's Affairs by the Court of Directors themselves, including the foreign as well as the home account. From the 11th of March to the 26th of April, the Committee made no report. On that day, a Petition was presented to the House itself, from the India Company, praying for immediate relief, and stating reasons for their not having been able to prepare such Petition before the 26th of April.

7. This Petition was referred to the Select Committee, with a general instruction "to examine the matter thereof, and to report the same, as it should appear to them, to the House;" but not separately from the whole subject of inquiry committed to them.

8. Their first and only report was not made till the 26th of May, and the printed copies of it not delivered to the Members until the 8th of June. All these unavoidable delays ended in a conclusion, which, undoubtedly, could not have been foreseen, *videlicet*, That whenever the report was taken into consideration, it would be in an empty House, or attended only by those, whom it concerned.

9. These, it was said, were Indian questions, which very few could understand,

and nobody would attend to. Nothing was in agitation, but the payment of a debt of a million and a half to the India Company out of the public purse, and the public had nothing to do with it! It was not an English question. Nothing, at least, can be more indisputable, than that the grounds of the Company's claim to the payment of a million and a half, supported by the Report of the Select Committee, are not at all understood.

10. From that hour to this, we have heard no more of the India Company in Parliament. There has been no Budget from the Board of Controul, nor Report from the Select Committee, expressly appointed in March 1808, to inquire into the State of the Company's Affairs, and to report the same. And even the Exposition of that State, drawn up by the Court of Directors, has been withheld not only from the Public, but even from the Trustees of the Public Purse, out of which the last million and a half was given to the said Company.—We are now in February, 1810, and the Company's Charter is going to be renewed. But, instead of paying for it, as other Corporate Bodies have usually done for every renewal of an exclusive privilege, it is actually said to be agreed that the Public shall lend or give them two millions more this year, to enable them to go on with their monopoly; that is, to enable a merchant to continue to divide 10½ per cent. without assets, on an ideal capital, of which there does not exist one sixpence in this world; and also to help them to export a million every year in gold and silver to China and India, as they have done for many years!—Of the House of Commons, generally, it is in vain to say any thing, except that they are the Trustees of the People, whom they tax. I shall, therefore, content myself with asking, in the emphatic words of Sir Philip Francis*, “Has the House of Commons a moral right, does it possess a constitutional competence, does it fall within the limits of any rational idea of the trust reposed in them, to feed the wants and support the existence of a mercantile corporation out of the public purse?”—By others it is said, and it may possibly be true, that the two millions, which the Company are going to receive, are not to be given them by a grant of Parliament, but that they are to apply for

an act to enable them to borrow so many millions on their bonds. Supposing this to be the case, it mends the matter very little. The money still is raised on the Public, and so much more of the Company's paper is to be forced into circulation. The whole of this question was slightly argued about three years ago, on occasion of the former Loan. On the part of the Company, it was said that they had a right to raise money on their own credit, that it concerned nobody but themselves, and that Parliament had no right to restrain them. On the other side it was stated that, in that very year, ending in March, 1808, by their own estimate, the domestic Balance against them, that is the excess of their payments beyond their receipts here in Leadenhall Street, would amount to 2,213,796*l.* and that, with a similar deficit for several years together, and saved only from avowed bankruptcy by new Loans, and Grants from Parliament, they continued to vote themselves a regular dividend of 10½ per Cent;—that, in favour of the Proprietors, the act of 1791 gave them a precedence in the application of the profits of the company in England, and allowed them to begin with their own dividend. Out of what Fund? Out of the net proceeds of their sales at home, and no other. It follows then that any dividend out of money borrowed, or from any fund but the net proceeds, is not only fraudulent on the face of it, but against law.—His Majesty's Ministers and others will be ready, as they always have been, to declare that the lenders of the two millions, on the security of the Company's credit, would have no claim on the Public, and with this help the measure will be carried again as it was before. The declarations of individuals, besides being open to dispute and explanation, bind nobody but themselves, and are conclusive of no opinion but their own. On the other side, the creditors will plead an Act of the Legislature, whose meaning is made known by their acts or resolutions, and not by the debates in either House. Supposing the borrower to be insolvent, the lenders will resort to the House of Commons for relief, with a plea, which it will be very easy to reject, but very difficult to answer. They will say that they confided in the care of that Honourable House, that it would not have allowed the Company to raise money on the community, without a certain knowledge, derived from a strict examina-

* Letter to Lord Howick, 1st July, 1807.

tion of their accounts, that they had a sufficient security to give, and that their creditors would be safe. They will tell the House of Commons, "In this case more than any other, because the India Company is perpetually under the inspection of Parliament, you are the Inquest and Guardian of the Country: Whatever you permit you sanction. We should not have lent a shilling on the Company's Bonds, without your Indorsement."

February 5, 1810.

X. X. X.

THANKS OF THE CITY OF LONDON TO MR. WARDLE.

On Tuesday, January 30, MR. WARDLE attended at Guildhall, to receive the Thanks, and the Freedom of the City, in a gold box, of the value of 100 guineas, voted him by the Corporation, for his able and patriotic conduct in the House of Commons, in bringing forward Charges against the late Commander-in-Chief. He was introduced to the Chamberlain by Mr. Alderman Goodbehere and Mr. Waithman (the mover and seconder) attended by several of the Livery, who received him in the politest manner.—After administering the oath, Mr. Chamberlain addressed him in the following words:—

GWYLLIM LLOYD WARDLE, Esq.—I give you joy, and, in the name of the right hon. the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Commoners of the City of London, in Common Council assembled, and agreeable to their unanimous Resolution, admit you to the Freedom of the Metropolis of the British Empire.—The Court has likewise unanimously resolved, that you having, unawed by ministerial threats, exhibited serious Charges against the late Commander-in-Chief, which have been clearly substantiated, and which have in fact induced his Royal Highness to resign a situation, of which, in the opinion of the Court, he is unworthy, are entitled to the esteem and gratitude of this Court and the Country.—I am, therefore, Sir, to return you the Thanks of the Court, together with a Memorial of your admission to the Freedom of this City, in a gold box, of the value of 100 guineas, in grateful testimony of the high sense they entertain of the zeal, impetuosity, and patriotism, which are so eminently evinced in that arduous and laudable undertaking.—The Court having so fully expressed their sense of the impor-

tance of the late Investigation, and of your meritorious conduct and perseverance, there is nothing left for me to add upon that subject: but, Sir, allow me to express a wish for your health and happiness, and that you may live to witness the good which we may hope will result from your exertions; and may mankind in general, and especially those of exalted rank, and in confidential situations, be deeply impressed with the truth of what has been declared by the prince of historians, that

Mulier amissa pudicitia haud alia abnuerit.

MR. WARDLE then, on receiving a copy of the Thanks and the Box from the Chamberlain, addressed him as follows:—

SIR—With sentiments of the highest respect and gratitude, I accept the Freedom of the City of London. I am little capable of saying how much I feel honoured by so high and proud a mark of distinction: for, however strong my nerves may be, when my duty calls me forth in defence of the rights and liberties of the people; still when so highly respected a portion of that people are conferring upon me such an invaluable pledge of their approbation, I feel myself unequal to do more than offer my plain, but heartfelt thanks. And yet, Sir, it is not alone this mark of favour that I am bound to acknowledge; but I have also to express my gratitude for that uniform and steady support given me by the Citizens of London, during the progress of those unexampled attacks that have been made upon me, in consequence of that very conduct which has been so distinguished by their approbation. That support, Sir, has enabled me successfully to defend myself against my enemies—the enemies of every public man who dares to expose and attack corruption. By continuing to expose and attack it, wherever it may offer itself, I trust to having continued to me the confidence and support of the first City in the World!—It is no small satisfaction to me, to receive my Freedom, during the Mayoralty of a Gentleman, who has already shewn himself the firm friend of the Rights and Liberties of the People, and of our excellent Constitution—such as it once was; and such as, I trust, it once more will be!—To you, Sir, for the handsome and flattering manner in which you have conferred this high honour upon me, much is due; and I beg leave to thank you kindly.

OFFICIAL PAPERS.

AMERICAN DISPUTE.—*Correspondence, between Mr. R. Smith, the American Secretary of State, and Mr. F. J. JACKSON, the English Envoy, &c. &c.*

MR. SMITH TO MR. PINKNEY.

(Continued from p. 160.)

The British Government ought not to have made such a proposition; because it not only, like others, naturalizes aliens, but in relation to the United States has even refused to discharge from the British service native citizens of the United States involuntarily detained. If an American seaman has resided in Great Britain, or has married therein, or has accepted a bounty in her naval service, his discharge therefrom, on the regular application to the British Government, has been invariably refused by its Board of Admiralty. This I state on the authority of the official reports made to this department.—It is, therefore, truly astonishing, that, with a knowledge of these facts, such a pretension should have been advanced at all: but, above all, that it should have been made a *sine qua non* to an act of plain justice, already so long delayed. This is the more to be regretted, as the omen does not favour the belief we would willingly cherish, that no predetermined exists in the Councils of his Britannic Majesty irreconcilable to an amicable arrangement of an affair, which, affecting so deeply the honour of the United States, must precede a general regulation of the mutual interests of the two countries.—After the correspondence with Mr. Jackson was terminated, two notes, of which copies are here-with sent to you, were presented to me in the name and by the hand of Mr. Oakley, the British Secretary of Legation.—The first requested a document, having the effect of a special passport or safeguard to Mr. Jackson and his family during their stay in the United States. As the laws of this country allow an unobstructed passage through every part of it, and, with the law of nations, equally in force, protect public Ministers and their families in all their privileges, such an application was regarded as somewhat singular. There was no hesitation, however, in furnishing a certificate of his public character, and to be used in any mode he might chuse. But what surprised most was the reason assigned for the application. The insult he alluded to was then, for the first time,

brought to the knowledge of this Government. It had, indeed, been among the rumours of the day, that some unbecoming scene had taken place at Norfolk, or Hampton, between some officers belonging to the Africaine and some of the inhabitants, and that it originated in the indiscretion of the former. No attention having been called for, and no inquiries made the truth of the case is unknown. But it was never supposed that Mr. Jackson himself, who was on board the frigate, had been personally insulted: nor is it yet perceived in what way he considers it as having happened. It is needless to remark that any representation on the subject would have instantly received every proper attention. Another ground on which a protection was asked for, is the supposed tendency of the language of our newspapers to excite popular violence on Mr. Jackson's person. Had he been longer and better acquainted with the habits and spirit of the American people, he would probably never have entertained an apprehension of that sort. If he meant to animadvert on the free language of the newspapers, he might justly be reminded that our laws, as those of his country, set bounds to that freedom: that the freedom of British prints, however great with respect to public characters of the United States, has never been a topic of complaint; and that supposing the latitude of the American press to exceed that of Great Britain, the difference is infinitely less in this respect between the two, than between the British press and that of the other nations of Europe. The second note seems to be essentially intended as a justification of the conduct of Mr. Jackson in that part of his correspondence which has given umbrage. If he intended it as a conciliatory advance, he ought not to have preceded it by a demand of passports, nor by the spirit or the manner in which that demand was made. He ought, in fact, if such was his object, to have substituted an explanation in the place of his reply to my premonitory letter. But whether he had one or other or both of these objects in view, it was necessary for him to have done more than is attempted in this paper. It was never objected to him that he had stated it as a fact that the three propositions in question had been submitted to me by Mr. Erskine, nor that he had stated it as made known to him by the instructions of Mr. Canning, that

the instruction to Mr. Erskine, containing those three conditions, was the only one from which his authority was derived to conclude an arrangement in the matter to which it related. The objection was, that a knowledge of this restriction of the authority of Mr. Erskine was imputed to this Government, and the repetition of the imputation even after it had been so frequently disclaimed. This was so gross an attack on the honour and veracity of the Government, as to forbid all further communications from him. Care was nevertheless taken, at the same time, to leave the door open for such as might be made through any other channel, however little the probability that any satisfactory communications would be received through any channel here. To the other inclosures I add a printed copy of a paper purporting to be a circular letter from Mr. Jackson to the British Consuls in the United States. This paper speaks for itself. As its contents entirely correspond with the paper last referred to, so they were unnecessary for the ostensible object of the letter, which was to make known Mr. Jackson's change of residence, and as the paper was at once put into circulation, it can only be regarded as a verbal address to the American people of a representation previously addressed to their Government; a procedure which cannot fail to be seen in its true light by his Sovereign.—The observations to which so much extent has been given in this letter, with those contained in the correspondence with Mr. Jackson, will make you fully acquainted with the conduct and the character he has developed, with the necessity of the step taken in refusing further communications from him, and with the grounds on which the President instructs you to request that he may be immediately recalled. You are particularly instructed, at the same time, in making these communications, to do it in a manner that will leave no doubt of the undiminished desire of the United States to unite in all the means the best calculated to establish the relations of the two countries on the solid foundation of justice, of friendship, and of mutual interest. With great respect, &c.

R. SMITH.

MR. CANNING TO MR. PINCKNEY.

Foreign Office, May 27, 1809.

Sir—According to the intimation which I gave to you in our last conference, I have now the honour to inclose to you a

copy of the Order in Council, which his Majesty has directed to be issued, for the purpose of preventing, as far as, possible any inconvenience or detriment to the Merchants of the United States, who may have entered into commercial speculations on the faith of the unauthorized engagements of Mr. Erskine, previously to the notification in America, of his Majesty's disavowal of those engagements.—Having had the honour to read to you *in extenso*, the instructions with which Mr. Erskine was furnished, it is not necessary for me to enter into any explanation of those points in which Mr. Erskine has acted, not only in not conformity, but in direct contradiction to them.—I forbear equally, from troubling you, Sir, with any comment, on the manner in which Mr. Erskine's communications have been received by the American Government, or upon the terms and spirit of Mr. Smith's share of the consideration.—Such observations will be communicated more properly through the Minister whom his Majesty has directed to proceed to America, not on any special mission (which Mr. Erskine was not authorised to promise, except upon conditions, not one of which he has obtained), but as the successor of Mr. Erskine, whom his Majesty has not lost a moment in recalling. I have the honour to be, with great consideration, Sir, your most obedient humble servant,

(Signed) GEORGE CANNING.

MR. PINCKNEY'S ANSWER.

Great Cumberland Place, May 29, 1809.

Sir—I have received the communication which you did me the honour to address to me on the 27th instant, and will hasten to transmit it to the Secretary of State of the United States. No instructions or information from my Government, concerning the transactions in America, to which your communication alludes, having yet reached me, I can only express my concern, that the conciliatory arrangements concerted and concluded, as you have done me the honour to inform me, between the American Secretary of State and his Majesty's accredited Minister at Washington; acting in consequence and professing to act in pursuance, of regular instructions from his Court, are not likely to have all that effect which was naturally to have been expected from them. I have the honour to be, with great consideration, Sir, your most obedient, humble servant

W. PINCKNEY.

FLUSHING—*Report of Adjutant Frederick Dubourg on the present state of the Dock, Port, and Arsenal of Flushing, dated from thence, Jan. 4, 1810.*

PRESENT STATE OF THE DOCK.

The interior wood of the quay of the Dock, on the side towards the Arsenal, is destroyed. The ground has been dug away, and thrown into the Dock, on the paved side of the embankment.—The quay on the side of the Old Dutch Bank is in a good state, and nearly in the condition it was in before the occupation of the enemy. The Quay for careening, which had been repaired by the enemy, has been reduced to its former state. The gates of the Dock and the Sluices have been blown up. Some large pieces of the timber remain, but they are shattered. From the general appearance of the mines employed by the enemy, it may be supposed that the foundations have not been injured. Both within and without the gates of the Dock, many vessels or boats laden with bullets and bombs have been sunk. Within the Dock there is a great quantity of cannon, or bombs, and of bullets which the enemy had thrown hastily into it, presuming that they should not have time to carry them away. From the middle of the Dam on the outside of the Sluice, the Dock may be very easily emptied, and the condition of the foundation of the Sluice thereby examined. The vessels or boats may be easily raised, and the cannon bullets, and bombs extracted, and every other incumbrance that has been thrown into the Dock. The value of the useful articles so obtained will pay the expense of the labour, and even repair the Sluice, if his Majesty should think fit that it should be restored.

THE ANTERIOR PART OF THE DOCK TO THE CHAIN.

Here the enemy has thrown the cleaning utensils, which may be easily abstracted. On the bank called the Royal Hollandais they have thrown a quantity of rubbish, which has elevated the soil nearly as high as the marshes. They have also thrown in ten pieces of cannon.

CHANNEL.

The piles which were driven in, both perpendicular and horizontal, have some of them been sawed. A brig and a pinnace have been thrown also into the middle of this channel. Also a boat on the north side; but all this may be easily removed.

THE ARSENAL.

The magazine and the different buildings attached to it have been burnt. The materials of building have been entirely destroyed.—The mercantile port has not been injured; there is only a boat at the entrance between the piers, which may with facility be drawn into the port. The same may be done with an English brig, which is very little damaged, and which remains near the Western Pier, under the ramparts of the town. This is one of those boats to which the enemy set fire on the approach of the French flotilla. In different situations on the bank there are about 15 wrecks of boats.—The English division which fled before the French flotilla, cut away its cables on setting sail. I have ordered the pilots to sound the channels, and to raise the anchors and cables which the enemy has abandoned.—No vessels have been sunken in the Dykes. The enemy intended to do this, but he was not allowed time to accomplish his purpose. Two vessels laden with several kinds of artillery, have been taken in the ports. A quantity of bullets that the enemy probably had not time to remove, are now deposited here—It is not possible at present to estimate the number of vessels the enemy has lost, but by the wrecks that are visible every where, the loss must have been considerable. The boats we have employed have preserved every thing, and among the materials are some masts of ships of the line. Many bodies of men and horses are floating on the coast. An inventory is preparing of the effects abandoned by the enemy.

(Signed) DUBOURG.

The Secretary General Minister at War

(Signed) FRIEON.